

**Letting Go: Forgive Yourself**  
No one is ever ruined for life, even though it feels helpless and impossible. The mantra needs to be: "It was not my fault." Every day is a new beginning, and it's never too late. You must believe this! Don't endow the person responsible for this with continued power over you—break away. The only one holding you back is you!

**The Glass Is Full: Turn Adversity into Strength**  
The remarkable thing is that what you will learn from this will make you a more powerful person. Ironically, [my husband] Curtis would not be the man he is today if it wasn't for his victimization and recovery. My husband is my hero. Though **Curtis' personal story** is somewhat sensational, he has chosen to share his experiences and has been speaking publicly about abuse and recovery. He has worked with government and social service agencies, local and national law enforcement, judicial offices and parent organizations to erase the stigma of being victimized, help keep children safe, encourage men to speak out and seek help, advocate for victims services and revolutionize sex offender management.



Because he speaks, our daughter Jenny speaks. Diagnosed with Tourette Syndrome in fifth grade, she found many challenges upon entering middle school, with relentless teasing and ridicule from her classmates. However, following her dad's example, Jenny had the courage to speak publicly at her school on what it's like to live with a disability, and as a result, garnered respect and empathy from her school and peers. You never know how far your work reaches. What gift do you have?

**It Takes Time: Understand That Recovery Is an On-going Process**  
Unfortunately, recovery does not happen overnight—it's a process that builds upon itself. You must also realize that for every two steps forward, there might be one step back. Allow yourself to feel sad for the slips, but celebrate and focus on the forward movement. From a spouse's point of view, it is not an easy road, and a lot depends upon timing, support, patience, humor, perseverance and love, but most of all hope—hope to believe that all things are possible. Come out of the shadows—you can be who you were meant to be.

Let the healing begin.

# Resources

<b>ACMI House</b>	<b>580 482-3800</b>
<b>Chapel</b>	<b>580 481-7485</b>
<b>Mental Health</b>	<b>580 481-5376</b>
<b>Equal Opportunity</b>	<b>580 481-6801</b>

This Month's featured Advocate is LT Kathleen Polesnak! LT Polesnak will be acting as an assistant to our Alternate SARC, MAJ Jeffery Felton. She comes to Altus by way of 52nd Fighter Wing, Spangdahlem AB, Germany where she was trained as a Victim Advocate and also served as Deputy SARC. While she was serving the Wing's SAPR program was named "best of the year" in U.S. Air Force in Europe!

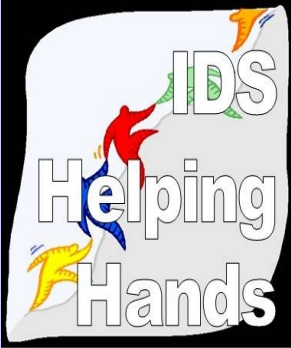
When asked why she is involved in the SAPR program she replied, "I became involved in the SAPR program in November 2009 when I expressed an interest to the SARC at Spangdahlem AB, Germany, Capt. Jamie Fanning, about becoming a victim advocate. She asked if I would be interested in not only being a VA, but also taking on the deputy SARC position. I was very excited about the opportunity and was lucky to have a supportive supervisor who allowed me to take on this additional role. Since then, I've had the privilege of working with some outstanding SARC's, attending several trainings and conferences, including Bystander Intervention Training, and working with some compassionate and impressive Victim Advocates. While I sort of stumbled into the position, it certainly has helped me develop as a leader, trainer, officer, event coordinator, and most importantly, a reliable helper. I believe my greatest accomplishments up to this point are linking victims with the care and resources they need and being able to help develop and teach other SARCs and VAs."

We salute you and thank you for serving the community of Altus Air Force Base!

## Advocate Corner



## SAPR February 2011 Newsletter



### 24/7 Hotline

**Cheryl Jones—SARC**  
**580 481-7428**

**580 649-0656**

**Anderal Ward— Deputy SARC**  
**580 481-7835**

### Community of Practice (CoP)

<https://www.my.af.mil/afknprod/community/views/home.aspx?Filter=21354>



**By Ilene Lieberman-St. John**  
***The Oprah Winfrey Show* November 12, 2010**

*As always SAPR Program likes to bring information to our readers to motivate you to assist and aid those in crisis as a result of Sexual Assault. The article this month exemplifies ways to help a male sexual assault survivor. I encourage you to read "Love Among the Ruins" by David France featured in O, Oprah Magazine September 16, 2008 for more information on Curtis and Ilene Lieberman.*

### Monthly Activities

**Bystander Intervention Training**  
**Chapel Annex, Bldg 116,**  
**Rm, 109 @ 1:00pm**  
***Males* Feb 7, 14, 22**  
***Female* Feb 28**

**VA Refresher Training**  
**Feb 17**  
**11:30am-1:00pm**  
**Bldg 52, EO Classroom**

While any kind of victimization is traumatic and life-changing, survivors of male childhood sexual abuse have the greatest challenges. Even in our enlightened age, society dictates that boys and men need to be tough, that to be considered "weak" is a disgrace and to have been placed in a powerless position is shameful. How can a man who has been stigmatized into silence believe that this terrible experience is not his fault?

I want to underscore, from my own personal experiences, that recovery is possible—and even empowering—but it takes tremendous courage, perseverance and understanding on the part of both the survivor and his family. It's a tough road but an unbelievably rewarding journey of self-discovery. I want to share what I have learned from all of my experiences in dealing with trauma:

#### The Only Way Out Is By Admitting That What You Went Through Still Affects Your Life

Every journey begins with a single step, and this one is huge. Denial is very powerful, and because of the stigmas mentioned above, admitting the effects of sexual abuse is almost an insurmountable task. However, as loving spouses, we must remember that we cannot force this, only encourage it. Fortunately or unfortunately, timing is everything.

#### You Are Not Alone: Find a Support Group

One of the most powerful tools is a support group, where you become a member of a group that really understands what you are going through. Finding your way to this is empowering: You will be heard and believed. It's a validation and justification of your experiences, with the tools to help you recover. Many organizations have resources including moderated chat rooms, referral lists, workshops and retreats, suggested reading lists and support for family members.

#### Ask for Help: Find a Good Therapist

Most support groups not only have a referral list but also detail how to go about finding the therapist that is right for you. Do not be afraid to "phone interview" a potential therapist, putting right up front what the situation is to make sure that they have therapeutic experience in this subject. Spouses: If your husband [or partner] is not ready, find a therapist who can give you the tools to help your family.

#### You Can Run, But You Cannot Hide: Examine Your Self-Destructive Behaviors

Suffering is something we all feel we cannot bear, and most victims seek out things they think will take the pain away. This practice of "self-medicating" merely dulls the pain and does not take it away. These are usually self-destructive behaviors, also caused by self-loathing. Why are you punishing yourself?